A GUIDE AND APPLICATION

FOR THE OPERATION AND APPROVAL

OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

William L. Librera
Commissioner

Isaac R. Bryant
Assistant Commissioner
Division of Student Services

Susan B. Martz
Director
Office of Program Support Services

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. 1   FOREWORD

This guide sets the requirements for operating alternative education programs in middle and high school settings, per **N.J.A.C 6A:16-8.1**, unless otherwise indicated. In addition, this guide includes quality program components, which are not requirements, but are components that should be taken into consideration when creating an alternative education program. For convenience, standard forms are included to facilitate the alternative education program approval process and to ensure that the educational planning process complies with the program completion requirements of the New Jersey Administrative Code.

1. 2   PURPOSE OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Alternative education programs can offer a viable and suitable educational option for students who have not experienced success in their regular education programs, because they are disruptive, disaffected or at-risk of dropping out. Understanding this, the New Jersey Department of Education took key steps to introduce the alternative education program as an option for dealing with this target population.

Students who are candidates for alternative education programs are those who may not be engaged in school due to individual, family, school, behavioral and/or community-related factors. Consequently, these students may have lost their commitment to school. There is evidence to suggest that adolescents who have lost their connection to school may suffer significant, long-term negative effects as they enter adulthood.

Wells (1990) reports that many aspects of adolescents' lives affect their ability to learn and succeed in school. Below is a list of a variety of circumstances that can place a student at risk:

School-related

- Conflict between home and school culture
- Ineffective discipline systems
- Lack of adequate counseling
- Negative school climate
- Lack of relevant curriculum
- Passive instructional strategies
- Disregard of student learning styles
- Retention and suspensions
- Low expectations
- Lack of language instruction

Family-related

- Low socioeconomic status
- Dysfunctional home life
- No parental involvement
- Low parental expectations
- Non-English speaking home
- Ineffective parenting or abuse
- High mobility

Community-related

- Lack of community support services or response
- Lack of community support for schools
- High incidences of criminal activities
- Lack of school or community linkages

Student-related

- Poor school attitude
- Low ability level
- Attendance/truancy
- Behavior/discipline problems
- Pregnancy
- Drug abuse
- Poor peer relations
- Nonparticipation
- Friends have dropped out
- Low self-esteem/self-efficacy

An alternative education program can create an environment that empowers students to change their attitudes and behaviors and to accomplish personal and academic goals. Thus, for most districts, alternative education programs offer a credible option to address the needs of students with a history of negative school experiences and who demonstrate patterns of behavior that have been disruptive to their own education and possibly to that of their classmates.

1.3   DEFINITION OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Alternative education programs, as defined by the State of New Jersey Department of Education, offer non-traditional, yet effective learning environments for at-risk students (students considered at-risk for academic failure and/or dropping out of school) that provide flexible educational objectives that take into consideration the learning styles and the individual needs of students. This learning opportunity is designed to meet the specific needs, interests, and aspirations of youth who may be disruptive, disaffected or otherwise at-risk of dropping out from the traditional academic environment and offers them the opportunity to become re-engaged with the educational system. Although flexible in its approach, the academic setting and curriculum of the alternative education program must address the areas of the Core Curriculum Content Standards (as of April 2004) and high school graduation requirements per *N.J.A.C.. 6A:8.*

The framework of alternative education programs must be designed to address the educational and social support services that the targeted population will need to succeed. To create a successful alternative educational environment, the programs must be small in size, carefully staffed, and provide intense, comprehensive and individualized services to students and their families. They may also incorporate site-based management approaches, cooperative learning strategies, and shared decision making within the program structure. In addition, alternative education programs provide a caring and supportive environment where rules and regulations are clearly defined and fairly and consistently enforced. To gain a better understanding of how to incorporate these components into an alternative education program, please refer to the quality components section of this guide.

Alternative education programs should *NOT* be designed to be punitive in nature nor should they be used as short-term suspension programs (i.e., in-school suspension) for students with behavioral problems. Alternative education programs also should *NOT* be used as a place for students and/or teachers who are perceived to be uncooperative.   These programs should be a comprehensive strategy for assisting those students, who for a variety of reasons, have not succeeded in their current educational settings. With this in mind, districts must work cooperatively with students, teachers, and parents to minimize alienation between alternative education programs and traditional educational

programs. This means encouraging students to become actively involved in the educational process and allowing them to choose to participate in alternative education programs.

1.4   TARGET POPULATION

When developing an alternative education program, program developers should have a clear definition of the students who would be most suitable for the program and develop the program with these students in mind. Generally, the target population for alternative education programs are those students who are disruptive, disaffected or at-risk of dropping out. These students may experience educational and behavioral problems in school, become disengaged in the regular academic setting, and are at-risk of dropping out. These adolescent are normally students between the ages of 11 and 18 who have had a history of negative school experiences and patterns of behavior that have been disruptive to their own education, as well as to that of their classmates. The causes of their problems are often complex and generally are difficult to overcome. They stem partially from personal and family problems and from a school climate that may be ill-suited to address their educational and social needs. These adolescents often exhibit chronic problems such as:

- Persistent and consistent disciplinary issues;
- Truancy;
- Absenteeism; or
- Continued academic failure.

These issues are evident through basic skills deficiencies and a sense of frustration, alienation and/or negative self-concept by the student. School environments that provide insufficient encouragement for these students are also contributing factors. These at-risk students may benefit from alternative education programs.

The scope of alternative education programs should be tailored to fit the ages and grade levels of the students served. Ideally, middle school alternative education programs should focus on reintegrating students back into a traditional academic environment. These programs should focus on helping students reconnect with the learning experience and with their learning environments. Middle school programs should not only educate students, but also nurture students and acknowledge the intellectual and social development that students are experiencing as young adolescents. High school programs should also pay attention to the individual social and developmental needs of the students, while assisting students in their efforts to complete their education, successfully transition into independent adulthood and obtain and maintain employment.

Special Education Students

Students who are eligible for special education and related services ***cannot*** be denied access to alternative education programs. Placement of special education students in alternative education programs shall be determined pursuant to ***N.J.A.C.*** **6A:14-2** in accordance with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or as an interim alternative placement in the appropriate circumstances. It must be clearly stated in the student's IEPs that the alternative education program is the appropriate placement for the student and the alternative education program must have the capacity to fulfill the IEP prior to accepting the student into the alternative education program.

1.5   PROGRAM GOALS

Based on the needs of the targeted population and the intent of *N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.1,* programs should be designed, at a minimum, to adhere to the following goals when developing their alternative education programs.

- To provide special support and assistance in a non-traditional academic environment that will help identified students develop more responsible patterns of behavior;

- To foster a student-focused school climate that attends to the individual educational needs of the students to assist them in achieving the Core Curriculum Content Standards;

- To increase students' understanding of and adherence to fundamental codes of conduct and compliance with school disciplinary policies and procedures in order to achieve a school climate that is conducive to learning and supports the safety and well-being of all students.

- To re-engage middle school students into the academic experience, while motivating and preparing them for reintegration into the traditional learning environment; and

- To provide students with an alternative, positive school environment that supports their success and ultimately leads to high school graduation through the attainment of the high school completion requirements.

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This section provides applicants with an outline of requirements for establishing an alternative education program. It is important to note that whether the program is within a school or is a school unto itself, an application needs to be submitted for the approval of the alternative education program. The department has established these requirements and guidelines for any educational program that has been established to serve students who are disruptive, disaffected or at-risk of dropping out from the regular educational environment.

2. 2   PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (*N.J.A.C.* 6A:16-8.1)

All New Jersey public school districts, charter schools, licensed schools acting under contract to provide educational services on behalf of New Jersey public school districts, and school programs operated by or under contract with the New Jersey Department of Corrections, and the New Jersey Department of Human Services or Juvenile Justice Commission, thereafter called "the agencies" that intend to establish and operate an alternative education program must complete and submit for approval the attached application according to the guidelines, set forth herein. The guidelines and application were created to implement *N.J.A.C.* 6A:16-8.1, which establishes the requirements for the application process and approval of alternative education programs.

Please note that some components described in this guide are intended either for only middle schools or high schools. When the school configuration is not specified, the components apply to both middle school and high school programs.

Alternative education programs, designed for either middle school or high school students are required to offer the following:

1. Student teacher ratio of 10:1 *(middle school programs only)*.

2. Student teacher ration of 12:1 *(high school programs only)*.

3. An Individualized Program Plan (IPP) that focuses on attendance, behavior and curriculum, must be developed for each student enrolled in the program.

4. Individualized instruction that engages each student in the learning process and addresses all areas of the Core Curriculum Content Standards, per *N.J.A.C.* 6A:8-3.

5. Comprehensive support services and programs which address each student's health, social development and behavioral needs.

6. Case management and referral services, including but not limited to monitoring and evaluating student progress and coordinating services *(middle school programs only)*.

7. Work-based learning experiences (*high school programs only)*.

8. Instruction by staff that are appropriately certified.

9. Compliance with attendance policies pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 6:3-9.3

10. The provision of services to students at least four hours per day for a minimum of 180 days per year.

- Middle School
  - Hours of operation in an alternative education middle school program should mirror those of the traditional middle school.
- High School
  - Hours of operation in an alternative education high school program can be conducted during the day or evening to accommodate the schedules of the students. Specifically outline the times the programs will be taking place and the reasoning associated with the times of the program.

11. Credits based on the program completion options pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:8-5.1(a)1ii *(high school only).*

12. Transitional services designed to reintegrate students back into traditional classes and the traditional academic environment. This may include activities such as mentoring, school tours, orientation sessions, and the exchange of information among middle and high school staff *(middle school programs only).*

13. Placements for students who are removed from general education for a firearms offenses, pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:16-5.5, and students removed from general education for assault with weapons offenses, pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:16-5.6.

High School Graduation Requirements

In January 2004, the State Board adopted revised high school graduation regulations, *N.J.A.C* **6A: 8-5.1.** Currently, there are two options for which students can achieve a state endorsed high school diploma. The first is through the traditional high school courses and accumulation of a series of "credits" in required content areas. An additional option, from here on addressed as Option Two, *(N.J.A.C* **6A:8-5.1(a)1ii)**, provides district boards of education with flexibility in developing activities and programs aimed at achieving the Core Curriculum Content Standards (as of April 2004). The credits awarded under this option are based on specific instructional objectives and demonstrated performance results, rather than on time spent in the program. Nonetheless, appropriate assessments must be developed to accompany the educational program that is created to fulfill Option Two. Additionally, student performance expectations must be established to assure that the Core Curriculum Content Standards and the program requirements have been met.

The alternative education program curriculum, while based on the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and fulfilling district graduation requirements, may also include other program components that will enhance the students' educational experiences.

Option Two from *N.J.A.C.* 6A:8-5.1(a)1ii for program completion is listed below:

- District boards of education may determine and establish curricular activities or programs aimed at achieving the Core Curriculum Content Standards for promotion and graduation purposes.

- Programs and appropriate assessments shall be planned for individuals and/or a group, based on specific instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

- Curricular activities and programs may involve in-depth experiences linked to the Core Curriculum Content Standards, such as:

  - Interdisciplinary or theme-based programs;

  - Independent study;

  - Co-curricular or extra-curricular activities;

  - Magnet programs;

  - Student exchange programs;

  - Distance learning opportunities;

  - Internships:

  - Community services; or

  - Other structured learning experiences.

- The principal shall certify completion of curricular activities or programs based upon specified instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

- Group programs based upon specific instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the Core Curriculum Content Standards shall be approved in the same manner as other approved courses.

- Individual programs based upon specific instructional objectives aimed at meeting or exceeding the Core Curriculum Content Standards shall be on file in the local district and subject to review by the Commissioner or his or her designee.

- District boards of education may utilize performance or competency assessment to approve student completion of programs aimed at meeting or exceeding the Core Curriculum Content Standards at the secondary level, including those occurring all or in part prior to a student's high school enrollment.

- District boards of education may recognize successful completion of an accredited college course that assures achievement of knowledge and skills as delineated in the Core Curriculum Content Standards or includes learning that builds on and goes beyond the standards.

Please refer to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:8-5.1 and the newly released document entitled "*MULTIPLE AND DIVERSE PATHS TO STUDENT SUCCESS: A GUIDE TO THE USE OF OPTION TWO*" which can be downloaded from the following website: www.state.nj.us/njded/aps/info/option2.htm. For additional inquiries, contact the Office of Academic and Professional Standards at 609-984-5322.

Workforce Development (High School Only)

In order to prepare students to be productive members of society with appropriate work skills, school districts may place students in on-the-job training experiences. These experiences may be cooperative education programs, job placement assistance, or a work-related component involving cross-content workplace readiness. The alternative education program must assure that the child labor laws and the cooperative vocational education program regulations (*N.J.A.C* **6:43-3-5 et. seq**.) are followed. For

more information, contact the Office of Vocational, Technical, Career and Adult Programs at 609-633-0665 or http://www.nj.gov/njded/voc/.

Individualized Program Plans (IPP)

Each alternative education program is responsible for the development of an Individualized Program Plan (IPP) for each student, in consultation with the sending school district, which outlines the program curriculum, assessments and goals for the student, in conformance with the program completion option authorized by the State Board of Education.

The IPP serves as the vehicle for planning the educational program for each student. It provides the student, parent or guardian, and teacher(s) with an overall program plan to guide the implementation of the agreed-upon educational experiences and program activities. It also provides documentation for the student to successfully achieve the Core Curriculum Content Standards, and for high school student's, documentation of the credits earned.

The IPP must be monitored by a certified staff member and include the method of assessment for the students progress, which should be kept on file both in the alternative education program and in the sending school district and are subject to review by the county office of education.

The IPP should be developed in consultation with appropriate staff members who are familiar with the student's educational and social-emotional performance. This may include the principal or supervisor, teacher, student, parent/guardian, school social worker, case manager or a school nurse.

The IPP should clearly delineate the areas of attendance, behavior, curriculum and the goals that a student is expected to attain in each area. A counselor or teacher, acting as case manager, should review each IPP, on a monthly basis, with the appropriate student. This process provides an ongoing opportunity to reinforce behavior management and monitor student progress.

On an annual basis, the IPP must be sent to the sending district for confirmation of student participation and, for high school students, verification of credits earned. Additionally, for students who will continue in the program during the next academic year, an updated IPP must be created and approved by the sending school district.

Staff Requirements

Alternative education program teachers, like all New Jersey certified teachers and educational services personnel are obligated to comply with the state's teaching certification requirements and to gain 100 hours of professional development every five years beginning in September 2000.

Alternative education teachers must fulfill the regulations for highly qualified teachers set by the New Jersey Department of Education in response to the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.* Please refer to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9 and the NJDOE web site for Highly Qualified Teachers at www.state.nj.us/njded/profdev/hqt. For additional inquiries, contact the Office of Academic and Professional Standards at 609-984-5322.

The teacher, in conjunction with his or her supervisor through the Professional Improvement Plan (PIP) process, will determine the professional development needs for the teacher in each five-year period. All professional development opportunities must meet the State standards for professional

development established by the Professional Teaching Standards Board and approved by the Commissioner of Education.

Abbott Districts

According to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:10A-3.5(i), all Abbott districts must continually assess the needs of at-risk students in both the middle and high schools for placement in alternative education programs.

For additional information on the implementation of alternative education programs within the Abbott schools, please contact the appropriate regional Office of Program Planning and Design by visiting http://www.nj.gov/njded/abbotts/contact.shtml or calling 609-292-6874.

Statement of Assurances

In an effort to maintain consistency across all of New Jersey alternative education programs and to bring uniformity to the responsibilities of alternative education program administrators and sending school district administrators, all applicants must sign the Alternative Education Program Statement of Assurances and submit it with the application. Applications will not be reviewed without the inclusion of this form.

2. 3   APPLICATION APPROVAL PROCESS

New Programs

Prior to establishing an alternative education program all applicants must submit an application and all required attachments to the county office of education for approval. Applications will only be accepted during the month of March preceding the school year the applicant would like the alternative education program to begin. This application is required to be submitted to the county office of education with the local educational agency (LEA) annual budget. Within six weeks of receipt of a complete application packet, applicants will receive a written response by the county office of education regarding their application for operating an alternative education program. Applicants must receive approval from the county office of education prior to the implementation of an alternative education program.

Applicants must submit two (2) copies of the application to the county office of education. For Abbott schools, please submit applications to the appropriate staff within the Office of Program Planning and Design.

The following information and materials are required at the time of submission of applicants who seek approval:

- Alternative Education Application (Appendix A);
- Board Resolution to Apply;
- Statement of Assurances (Appendix B) ; and
- A program budget (Form A).

PLEASE NOTE: FOR THE 2004 -2005 SCHOOL YEAR APPLICANTS WILL BE ABLE TO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS ON A ROLLING BASIS UNTIL MARCH 2005. BEGINNING IN THE 2005-2006 SCHOOL YEAR, APPLICATIONS (FOR NEW OR EXISTING PROGRAMS) WILL BE ACCEPTED ANNUALLY IN MARCH FOR PROGRAMS TO BEGIN IN SEPTEMBER, TO

COINCIDE WITH THE LEA ANNUAL BUDGET, AND IN JULY FOR PROGRAMS TO BEGIN IN JANUARY.

Existing Programs

If you currently have an alternative education program that has been approved by the county office of education after September 2002 you may be eligible to submit a renewal application. A renewal application can be submitted when the program has not had any major updates or changes since its last approval. The county office of education may request additional program information if deemed necessary. For additional information about the renewal process see Appendix E for criteria for submitting a renewal application.

For renewal applicants, the following information and materials are required at the time of submission of applicants who seek approval:
- Alternative Education Renewal Application (Appendix E); and
- Statement of Assurances (Appendix B).

SECTION THREE: PROGRAM DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This section highlights program design considerations and quality components that should be considered when creating an alternative education program.

3.2   IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL

Districts implementing alternative education programs should utilize an identification and referral process as an initial point of intervention before placing students into an alternative education program. The chief school administrator or designee from the sending school district shall be responsible for the placement and monitoring of students in alternative education programs. It is important to document properly all interventions and to keep accurate records of relevant information.

Classroom teachers may be the first points of contact for students who are having difficulty functioning in the classroom. Students who have been disruptive or who appear to need extra support and guidance, educationally and/or socially, may be potential candidates for an alternative education program. Additionally, students who, due to excessive truancy or absenteeism and have not met educational benchmarks, should be identified and evaluated as possible candidates for the program. Teachers can conduct interventions, such as student conferences, supplemental assistance, parent conferences, discipline referrals, when needed, and referrals to school counselors. School counselors, case managers and school social workers are additional resources who can be utilized to facilitate student conferences, interventions, and act as parent contacts.

The school's program of Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) pursuant to N.J.A.C 6A:16-7 is an additional resource that can be used to develop and implement interventions, provide recommendations and review student progress in the general education program. The building-based I&RS team consists of staff with a broad base of knowledge and expertise that shares ideas and information that may help a student become more successful in the academic environment. The I&RS team also can identify appropriate community resources and provide referral services to students and families. A possible component of an I&RS team action plan could be a referral to an alternative education program. For students with educational needs beyond the scope of an alternative education program, other options may be appropriate such as a Child Study Team referral as stated in N.J.A.C 6A:14-3.3, a 504 plan (34 CFR, Part 104) or other options.

If it is determined that a student is appropriate for an alternative education program, all parties involved must be notified. This includes the classroom teacher, the building administrator, the school counselor, the student and the parent. The student's records should be forwarded and an entrance conference should be held with the alternative education program staff and relevant staff from the regular academic setting.

3.3   PROGRAM PLANNING

As districts begin to consider the need for alternative education programs, there are critical issues that should be addressed to build program success and effectiveness. Districts must carefully assess the needs of their students, schools and of their communities. It is highly recommended that districts conduct needs assessments of the student population and available services to identify the gaps in services relevant to the target population. Each alternative education program should have a clearly defined purpose and describe the population to be served, how long students will attend, and how the program is designed to improve the academic outcomes of the students. Additionally, the program should detail the curriculum that will be offered, how the curriculum links to the Core Curriculum Content Standards, what assessments will be used, and what additional support services may be needed to assist students' positive social development. Experienced school staff and/or consultants should be utilized to assist with alternative education program development.

Based on the identified needs and the estimated number of students who will be eligible to participate in an alternative education program, multiple alternative models may be warranted to adequately address the varied needs of students. This can be accomplished by utilizing models, such as:

- Countywide alternative education programs;
- Local alternative education programs; or
- Collaborative regional alternative education programs.

Within each of these models, the configuration and delivery system may vary. The programs can take place in a class or classrooms within a school; as a program within a school; or as a separate self-contained alternative school. With these configurations, districts are able to serve various populations, while at the same time providing services that are specific to the needs of students.

The scope of an alternative education program is different for middle and high school students. Overall, program developers should incorporate comprehensive support services to address the social and emotional needs of the students. However, the middle school and high school programs should have different approaches for reaching academic goals of middle school and high school students. Per N.J.A.C 6A:16-8.2 (b)9, the goal for the middle school program should be to help students transition back to the general education program setting as soon as the presenting problem or situation is addressed and corrected. Middle school alternative education programs may be designed for students who might need short term interventions to manage or resolve a particular problem or situation that is having a negative impact on their education. On the other hand, programs most frequently designed for high school students should provide them with a flexible educational environment that assist, the student, with completing the requirements needed for high school graduation.

3.4   QUALITY PROGRAM COMPONENTS

In alternative education programs, classes are conducted to provide students with the necessary instruction, supervised educational activities, and related supportive services that will enable them to complete their school districts' middle or high school requirements. The information in this section is not required, however, it is strongly recommended that providers consider the following when developing and implementing an alternative education program

General Program Design

To create a comprehensive alternative education program these distinct characteristics should be considered:

- **Population to be Served-** Students with specific needs and an identified set of characteristics or problems that prohibit them from achieving in a traditional education setting.

- **Site-Based Program Coordinator -** A certified professional assigned to the facility who has responsibility for program supervision and coordination. If the responsibility also includes supervision of staff, the individual must hold an official supervisor's certificate.

- **Small Program and Class Size -** Enables the program to maintain its unique features, while providing a low student-teacher ratio, which affords teachers the opportunity to establish personal relationships with students and to offer individual attention to students' learning, behavioral nee and social-emotional needs.

- **Comprehensive Support Services -** Health, substance abuse, counseling services, and other student support services specifically tailored to facilitate student adjustment and educational success. In Abbott districts, the Coordinator of Health and Social Services, as well as, the Dropout Prevention Specialist should support the implementation and the goals of alternative education programs.

- **Case Management and Referral Services –** These services link the students and their families to available school and community resources while providing one on one support to students and their families.

According to a report by the National Association of State Boards of Education[1] successful alternative education programs share a set of specific characteristics. The success of these programs has been measured in terms of improved grades, school attendance, and graduation rates; decreases in disruptive behavior and/or violent behaviors and suspensions; and an improved sense of self and direction among participating students:

- **High Academic Standards/Expectations** – Researchers have consistently found that successful programs/schools set clear and high education standards and expectations for their students. The curriculums in these programs are not diluted or "watered-down." Furthermore, the curriculums are often expanded to enhance the educational and vocational interest of the students.

- **High Standards of Interpersonal/Social Interactions** – Successful alternative education programs/schools have well-defined standards of behaviors. In addition to having strict and clear expectations that are consistently applied to everyone, successful alternative education programs and schools rely on interventions and expanded curriculum that foster the development of interpersonal and social skills. Most address issues such as family life, peer pressure and conflict resolution.

- **Student-Centered Education and Intervention Plans** – Successful programs/schools have their structure and support services designed with both the educational and social needs of the

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[1]National Association of State Boards of Education, "Alternative Education for Students at Risk," *Policy Update*, Vol. 4, No. 8, Policy Information Clearinghouse, Alexandria, VA, May 1996.

students in mind. Therefore, it is imperative that alternative education programs/schools provide assessments and support services needed to clearly identify and address the cognitive, emotional, health and socio-economic factors affecting the education and development of participating students.

- **Teacher/Student Ratio** – Research findings also indicate that low teacher/student ratios are important to give students more individualized attention. New Jersey requires that there be a 1: 12 teacher to student ratio for high school alternative education programs and a 1:10 teacher to student ratio for middle school alternative education programs.

- **Site-based Management/Flexibility** – While having clear and strong accountability measurement systems, successful alternative education programs and schools are often free from centralized management. Administrators, teachers, support services staff, students, and parents are involved in the different aspects of the program in which they participate. This involvement is done through issue/task-specific communications or what could be described as "quality circles."

- **Parent and Community Involvement** – Parent and community involvement is critical for the success of alternative education programs/schools. All of the programs and schools identified in various research projects noted that the parents of prospective students must agree to participate in clearly defined ways beyond parent/teacher meetings. Some require that parents volunteer some of their time to the program or school, others require participation in family life seminars.

- **Locations** – In some instances, the location of the alternative education program could assist in the programs success. Programs are often set within a traditional school. At times they are located within a community school or agency. On the other hand, most alternative schools have their own facilities, share a facility with a larger school, or are located within community colleges or a university campus. Having a space that is designated for the program allows the students to have a space dedicated to their needs. Regardless of the location, successful programs and schools provide healthy physical environments that foster education, emotional well-being, a sense of pride, and safety.

An alternative education program cultivates a sense of community by encouraging supportive relationships between students, teachers, parents, and caregivers. It is an environment of trust and support, where everyone works toward the common goal of improved student achievement. Moreover, students come to school because they believe that their teachers and peers care about them. This setting gives students a fresh start, academically and behaviorally, by providing opportunities for success while, at the same time, addressing the causes of behavior that place them at risk of dropping out of school.

Curriculum and Instruction

The alternative education program curriculum must be aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and have appropriate assessments to measure student success achieving curricular goals. The curriculum may include additional program components to address the needs of the student population. The curriculum must be developed in consultation with and approved by the sending school district.

Clear goals, specific objectives (that reflect both the alternative education program and the sending school district's curriculum) and an individually paced program should be designed for each student. Instructional approaches should be matched to students' behavioral needs, learning styles, abilities, and academic goals in curricular areas. Alternative education programs must provide clear standards for achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards. Classes should be structured to facilitate the development of life skills, as well as the attainment of educational goals.

Alternative education programs cannot be effective when they provide the same kind of group instruction that typically occurs in traditional schools. Therefore, programs must be flexible and use creative instructional methods, such as team teaching and thematic instruction. This encourages the integration of content from several curricular areas and aids in the development of essential critical thinking skills. Teachers and students should focus on mastery and achievement as the personal benchmarks for student success.

Staffing and Professional Development

Teachers', counselors', and administrators' unique characteristics and personal and professional experiences impact the effectiveness of alternative education programs. Program staff should be caring, accepting, and able to develop an understanding of different approaches for dealing with and addressing some of the students within the alternative education program.

In the middle school setting, teachers must understand the developmental changes (i.e., emotional, social, and physical) effecting adolescents during this period and be able to identify the behaviors that are a result of those changes. Successful teachers can implement instructional techniques that take into consideration the unique developmental characteristics and individual needs of early adolescents.

It is commonly acknowledged that effective teachers in alternative education settings share a specific set of characteristics, they are:

- altruistic
- committed/dedicated
- creative
- caring
- compassionate/empathetic
- enthusiastic
- firm but fair
- flexible
- holds high expectations for students
- levelheaded
- non-judgmental/open-minded
- patient
- persistent
- pragmatic
- trustworthy

Effective alternative education teachers also have excellent planning skills, enjoy working with at-risk students, have the ability to engage students in learning, have varied life experiences, demonstrate a broad knowledge base, have the ability to connect theory and practice, and are willing to experiment with new structures.

Program staff will need routine access to colleagues in the district, who have special expertise (e.g. counseling or pupil personnel services) and who can provide technical assistance. In addition, staff must have the ability to meet both with colleagues internal and external to the program, to engage in group problem solving, and to share their concerns and ideas.

Case Management Services

Case management services are perhaps the single most important component of a middle school alternative education program. The case manager is critical to the process because of his/her role in helping the student become successful in the program and reengaged in the learning process. According to Smith[2], there are seven components of case management:

- **Assessments** - identifying the causes of students' difficulties;

- **Service Plan** - developing a plan of coordinated services tailored to each student;

- **Brokering** - linking targeted students and their families with services that cannot be provided in the program;

- **Service Implementation and Coordination** - ensuring that all services for a student are working together for the student's benefit and that service providers are communicating effectively;

- **Advocacy** - facilitating communication and mediate conflicts;

- **Monitoring and Evaluation** - tracking services, monitoring the student's condition and needs and then adjusts service plan as needed; and

- **Mentoring** - following through on behalf of the student or family and is a central point of communication.

Case managers will need ongoing training and professional development that will advance their skills and help them discover innovative ways to address problem behaviors with students and families. Case managers must also learn how to link with the community and secure services for students from available resources.

Student Attendance

Students must be in school to benefit from the education and support service available. Attendance must be addressed thoroughly during program development. Districts are encouraged to develop attendance policies for alternative education programs that clearly reflect the needs of the student while complying with state attendance requirements.

The department expects all students, either middle or high school, to attend the alternative education program full time while the program is in session. High school alternative education programs that are based on Option Two within *N.J.A.C.* 6A:8-5.1(a)1ii , High School Graduation Requirements, as opposed to seat time should pay special attention to the amount of time that is necessary and required to meet the objectives of the Core Curriculum Content Standards and graduation requirements. The attendance policy should establish the attendance requirements and diverse responses to unexcused absences. Sending districts should consider the pupil attendance requirements when determining whether out-of- district placement is appropriate and approve the attendance policy of the alternative education program prior to the student's admittance.

An accurate record of daily attendance must be maintained for each student and since some of the program activities may not be school or classroom based, attendance should be considered in the

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[2] Smith, Albert J. (1995). School-Based Case Management: An Integrated Service Model for Early Intervention with Potential Dropouts. The Journal of At-Risk Issues, Number 10, 1-11.

context of the student's participation in the various program components, regardless of the setting in which they take place.

Goals for individual student attendance should be clearly delineated in each student's IPP and monitored by program staff. Students with potential truancy problems should be identified as early as possible, should receive appropriate interventions, and should be monitored carefully for IPP compliance.

Career Development and Service Learning

Career development is an important component of a middle school alternative education program and can be incorporated into the program by using activities, such as field trips, job shadowing, community service, and career exploration.

Students who have had repeated failure in school and who have negative attitudes toward school can find success when engaged in service learning activities, particularly those that are community based. Research has shown that service learning when integrated into the curriculum, has a direct impact on academic success. Students begin to feel proud of their own abilities and become motivated to achieve further success in the academic arena. Service learning, incorporated into an alternative education program, should reconnect students to their communities, empower students and enhance their self-esteem, develop workplace readiness skills, and ultimately help students reintegrate into a traditional high school setting.

Collaboration

Districts are encouraged to develop collaborative partnerships with community service providers and community-based organizations. These relationships will help to provide a continuum of services to students and their families, as well as facilitate student access to services and activities outside of the alternative education program.

In instances of countywide alternative education programs, it may be beneficial for the participating districts to develop a management committee that will assist with the implementation of the program and the provision of services to students in the program. Should districts utilize this option, the transitional services provided for middle school students are key and should be developed initially to prepare students for reintegration back to their home schools and/or district.

Programs may find it beneficial to establish or utilize an existing advisory committee, comprised of teachers, parents, community members, social service providers, and community based organizations to support the alternative education program. This committee should help with administrative oversight and implementation of the program.

3.5   BUDGET

The state foundation aid allotment combined with local school tax revenues and any other special funding sources provide the financial base for alternative education programs.

A budget should be projected for the proposed alternative education program. It should account for all the anticipated operating expenses required to run the program. The district budget summary (Form A) must be completed.

All funding sources for any aspect of the alternative education program should be included in the detailed budget breakdown and referenced on the District/School Budget Summary form. Additional sources of fiscal support may include Title IV, Part A, the federal Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, Title VI, Innovative Educational Strategies, discretionary funds and Demonstrably Effective Program Aid (DEPA).

SECTION FOUR: FORMS

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO OPERATE AN
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

1. **Program Location**

District _____   District Code   _____

County _____   County Code   _____

School Name _____   Grade Level(s)   _____

Address _____   Phone   _____

_____

District Contact Person _____   Phone   _____
Email _____   Fax   _____

*Districts implementing regional or countywide programs should also complete this section.

District _____   County _____
(Regional or countywide programs)   *(Regional or countywide programs)*

District Contact Person _____   Phone _____
(Regional or countywide programs)

*Attach separate pages for each additional district that will participate in this alternative education program. You may also include copies of letters of intent or letters of agreement.

Approval is requested for the proposed alternative education program described herein.

_____   _____
Date Submitted   (Signature)   Principal Submitting Proposal

_____   _____
Date Submitted   (Signature) Chief School Administrator

_____   _____
Date Approved   (Signature) County Superintendent of Schools

_____   _____
Date Approved   (Signature) **OPPD** Manager**
**(This applies only to Abbott Districts)

Districts implementing regional or countywide programs should also complete this section.

_____   _____

Date Submitted   (Signature) Middle/High School Principal

_____   _____

Date Submitted   (Signature) Chief School Administrator

_____   _____

Date Approved   (Signature) County Superintendent of Schools

_____   _____

Date Approved   (Signature) OPPD Manager**

*Attach separate pages for each additional district that will participate in this alternative education program.

Statement of Need: This section identifies the local conditions and/or needs that justify the program. All applicants must describe:
- How the applicant conducted an evaluation of the school's and/or district's need for the alternative education program and the available resources to the program;
- The results of the evaluation; and
- How the proposed alternative education program will address the identified needs.

Program Description: In this section the applicant must provide a detailed description of the proposed program and the plan for implementation. All questions below MUST be addressed in this section.

Location
- Indicate the location of the proposed alternative education program, and provide a description of the site/facility, which must be approved by the county superintendent and the Office of School Facilities, Division of Finance.
    - For more information contact the office at 609-984-2738 or visit http://www.nj.gov/njded/facilities
- Explain the suitability of the location to the program's purpose and design.
- Indicate the proposed program start date. Pertinent calendars and daily schedules for the proposed program should also be included with the application.

Population
- Describe the learning and behavioral characteristics of the students for whom the proposed program is intended and appropriate.
- Indicate the number of students by age or grade level that will be served by the program.

Student Identification, Assessment, and Placement
- Describe the mechanism that will be used to identify and refer students to the program. Also, discuss the selection criteria, the assessment process, and the placement procedures to be used when placing a student in the program. Explain the differences, if any, in the referral processes used by different sites that may refer students to the program.

Advisory Board/School Leadership Council

- Describe the role and function of the advisory board or school leadership council.
- Identify the representatives serving on this committee and how often it meets.

Program Goals/Objectives

- Describe the program's overall goals and the programs objectives to achieve them.

Content/Curriculum and Program Design
- Describe the program curriculum and how the content will provide an alternative approach to meeting the credit year requirements for each curricular area; (including how the curriculum was developed and who was involved in its development).
- Clearly indicate the links to the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS as of April 2004).
- Describe the assessment that will be used to determine competency in the curriculum.
- Describe what educational methods and materials will be used to achieve the instructional objectives.
- Describe the attendance policy and what action will be taken for excessive unexcused absences.

- Describe how Individual Program Plans (IPP) will be created, monitored and annually reviewed by the alternative education program and the sending school district.
- Describe any additional quality components (as listed in the guidelines) that will be implemented in the program.

Program Staff

- Describe how the program will provide sufficient staff to teach and oversee the program.
- Provide a description of the procedures for supervising and evaluating the alternative education program.
- List the titles, certifications and/or endorsements, and names, if applicable, of all teaching and support staff who will work in the program (e.g., teachers, school aides, teacher assistants, counselors).
- Describe the responsibilities of the administrative, supervisory, and instructional staff, including community resource persons, as appropriate to the program.

Comprehensive Support Services

- Describe the supportive services (e.g., counseling, health services, and substance awareness support) that will be available to students enrolled in the program and to their families.
  - o Personal Development – Describe the behavior management strategies, the counseling approaches, and the curriculum that will be employed to effect positive changes in student behavior and attendance.

Case Management and Referral Services (Middle School Programs Only)

- Describe how the program will monitor and evaluate student progress and coordinate services.
  - o Describe how the program will coordinate school and/or community resources.
  - o Describe any services that may be provided by private and/or public agencies, including business and industry as additional support for students. Describe the nature and extent of their participation.

Work-Based Learning Experience (High School Programs Only)

- Describe the work-based and/or cooperative education experiences that will be offered through the program.
  - o It should be noted that when students are involved in on-the-job training experiences as part of the program, the district must adhere to the child labor laws: _N.J.S.A._ 18A:34:2-21.1 et seq., cooperative vocational education program regulations (_N.J.A.C._ 6:43-3.5 et seq.), and other vocational education guidelines established by the Department of Education.

Transition/Exit Procedures

- Describe the procedures to be used to facilitate the transition from school-to-work or post-secondary training and education, and/or to return students who have or have not achieved program objectives to the district's regular program, when suitable.

Cooperative and Regional Approach

- If applicable, describe how the program will involve other entities (e.g., multiple schools, multiple districts) in order to efficiently serve students.
- If the alternative education program will accept students from more than one school or district, then indicate the name of the school(s) or district(s) and the contact people at their locations. Attach copies of letters of intent or letters of agreement from each school district and any outside agencies or organizations that will provide services and participate in the program's planning and management committee.

Budget Summary

The anticipated operating expenses for the proposed alternative education program must be projected on the budget summary found on the budget page. The following information will assist the applicant in completing the budget summary.

Accounts: Refer to The Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts (Handbook 2R2) for New Jersey Public Schools.

Amount: Enter the budget appropriations by the major account series and sub-accounts as indicated in the "Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts."

Source: Indicate the source of the funding support (federal state, local).

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM
BUDGET SUMMARY

Applicant Name _____

County Code _____

Project Title _____

District Code _____

School Code _____

BUDGET CATEGORY	FUNCTION & OBJECT CODES	LOCAL (COLUMN 1)	FUNDING SOURCES			
			STATE (Column 2)	FEDERAL (Column 3)	OTHER (Column 4)	TOTAL (Column 5)

Alternative Education Program

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

The _____(program name) hereby assures that:

1.   The program will take place in a safe and easily accessible facility.

2.   The applicant will implement the alternative education program as described in the application.

3.   The applicant will submit a renewal application on an annual basis in March to the county office of education.

4.   The applicant will communicate with the sending school district in its development and implementation of the Individual Program Plan.

5.   The applicant will notify the Chief School Administrator and principal from the sending district annually on the progress, status, and credits achieved for each student.

6.   The applicant will provide each student with an equitable education based on the Core Curriculum Content Standards and allow the student full opportunity to fulfill the sending school district's graduation requirements.

_____   _____
Program Principal/Supervisor (Please Print)   Date

_____
Program Principal/Supervisor Signature

_____
Chief School Administrator (Please Print)

_____
Chief School Administrator Signature

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Individualized Program Plan
High School

An Individualized Program Plan (IPP) shall be prepared annually for each student placed in an alternative education program. The IPP which provides the student, parent, and teacher with an overall program plan for guiding the implementation of the agreed-upon educational experiences and program activities that satisfy the credit year and curriculum proficiency requirements,

I.   IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Name of Student ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯ Grade   _____   Incoming Credits _____

Sending School ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯   District   _____   County _____

School Year _____   Date of Birth   _____

II.   PROGRAM OPTION

The above-named student has been recommended for placement in the alternative education program indicated below:

Program Name⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯   Location⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

_____

_____

A.   Provide a Brief Program Description

B.   Provide a rationale which supports the recommendation of the student being placed in the above named program.

C.   The students subject's strengths are in the following areas:

D.   The student's subject weaknesses are in the following areas:

III.   *PLANNING TEAM*

List below the individuals that planned the alternative education program option for the above named student:

Name	**Title**
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The program described in this plan has been discussed with the student and reviewed and accepted by the parent(s) or guardian(s).

Student   _____

                    Name (please print)

_____   _____

                    Signature   Date

Parent/Guardian   _____

                    Name (please print)

_____   _____

                    Signature   Date

I hereby certify that the program option indicated above has been reviewed and approved by me for the above-named student and that the number of credits for the curricular area(s) indicated in Section V will be assigned toward completion of the credit year requirement upon successful completion of the program.

Program Principal/Supervisor   _____

                                Name (please print)

_____   _____

                                Signature   Date

I hereby certify that the program option indicated above has been reviewed and approved by me for the above-named student and that the number of credits for the curricular area(s) indicated in Section V is acceptable in pursuance of the sending district's state-endorsed high school diploma.

Sending School   _____

Principal   _____

                    Name (please print)

_____   _____

                    Signature   Date

IV.   INTAKE STATUS

1. Current Academic Standing/Report Card. (Please attach the most recent report card and standardized test scores).
2. Current attendance record.
3. Current disciplinary record, including suspensions and expulsions.

V.   CURRICULAR PLAN

1.   Credit Status Overview

Admission Number of Total Credits: ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯
Sending H.S. credit requirements for graduation ⎯⎯⎯⎯

HSPA Language Arts Literacy
    Partially Proficient ⎯⎯⎯   Proficient ⎯⎯⎯   Advanced Proficient ⎯⎯⎯

HSPA Math
    Partially Proficient ⎯⎯⎯   Proficient ⎯⎯⎯   Advanced Proficient ⎯⎯⎯

HSPA Science (beginning March 2005)
    Partially Proficient ⎯⎯⎯   Proficient ⎯⎯⎯   Advanced Proficient ⎯⎯⎯

LE
    MACII Score   ⎯⎯⎯

State Requirements (Note where earned and number of credits. Please refer to N.J.A.C.6A:8-5.1)

	COURSE TITLE	CREDITS	SCHOOL OF RECORD
Language Arts Literacy	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯
Mathematics	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯
Science	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯
Social Studies	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯
World Languages	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯
Comprehensive Health and Physical Education	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯
Visual and Performing Arts	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯	⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

Career Education and
Consumer, Family
and Life Skills   _____   _____   _____

Technological Literacy
                                  _____   _____   _____

District Requirements (If applicable)

	COURSE TITLE	CREDITS	SCHOOL OF RECORD
Language Arts Literacy	_____	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
Science			
Social Studies	_____	_____	_____
World Languages	_____	_____	_____
Visual and Performing Arts	_____	_____	_____
Comprehensive Health and Physical Education	_____	_____	_____
Career Education and Consumer, Family and Life Skills	_____	_____	_____
Technological Literacy	_____	_____	_____

ELECTIVE(S)   **COURSE TITLE**   **CREDITS**   **SCHOOL OF RECORD**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

    2.   Please choose from the following to describe how the curriculum will be met:
        a. Regular course completion
        b. Program completion (Option II, see page 10-12 of this document for more information)

Note: Any combination of the (a) regular course completion, (b) program completion options may be used when designing individualized program plans for students.

    a. Regular Course Completion – Indicate the number of credits that will be earned for each curricular area:

CURRICULUM AREA	COURSE TITLE	CREDITS TO BE EARNED
Language Arts Literacy	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____
Science	_____	_____
Social Studies	_____	_____

World Languages   _____   _____

Comprehensive Health and Physical
Education   _____   _____

Visual and Performing Arts   _____   _____

Career Education and Consumer,
Family and Life Skills   _____   _____

Technological Literacy   _____   _____

Electives/Other   _____   _____

b. Program Completion (Option II) – Indicate the specific curriculum proficiencies that will be met for each aspect of the educational experience(s) included in the plan and the number of credits earned in each curricular area:

CURRICULUM AREA	COURSE TITLE	CREDITS TO BE EARNED
Language Arts Literacy	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____
Science	_____	_____
Social Studies	_____	_____
World Languages	_____	_____
Comprehensive Health and Physical Education	_____	_____
Visual and Performing Arts	_____	_____
Career Education and Consumer, Family and Life Skills	_____	_____
Technological Literacy	_____	_____
Electives/Other	_____	_____

1. Indicate the credit year requirement that has been met and the number of credits awarded by assessment of proficiency for each curriculum area:

Credit Year Requirement ————————————————— Credit Award ———

Credit Year Requirement ————————————————— Credit Award ———

Credit Year Requirement ————————————————— Credit Award ———

Please note that when the above option is selected as the basis for meeting the proficiencies required for any curricular area(s), a copy of the test(s) or assessment measure(s) used must be approved and filed with the program coordinator. <u>A statement explaining the reason(s) for using this option as the basis for awarding high school credit to the above-named student must be attached to the plan.</u>

2. College Courses – Please list all college course credit(s) obtained by student if applicable

COURSE TITLE ————————— Credit Earned ——— CURRICULUM AREA —————————

COURSE TITLE ————————— Credit Earned ——— CURRICULUM AREA —————————

COURSE TITLE ————————— Credit Earned ——— CURRICULUM AREA —————————

3. Work Study/C.I.E./Community Services

Number of Hours ————————— Credit Earned ——— CURRICULUM AREA —————————

Number of Hours ————————— Credit Earned ——— CURRICULUM AREA —————————

Number of Hours ————————— Credit Earned ——— CURRICULUM AREA —————————

VI.   PERSONAL/SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

In each area below, indicate the student's goals, the objectives related to those goals and the staff member responsible for reviewing the student's progress. In addition, any supportive services and/or enrichment activities (e.g. group counseling once per week, individual counseling twice per week, service learning project) should be delineated in the appropriate area.

ATTENDANCE:

BEHAVIOR:

CAREER DEVELOPMENT:

PERSONAL GROWTH:

OTHER (INDIVIDUALIZED CONCERNS):

VII. CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION

This form must be signed at the end of each program year and kept on file at both the alternative education program and the sending school.

I hereby certify that the plan has been successfully implemented and satisfactorily completed and that credit has been granted and authorized for recording on the student's transcript.

Program Principal/Supervisor   _____
                                         (Please Print)

Signature   _____

Date   _____

Sending School   _____

Principal   _____
               (Please Print)

Signature   _____

Date   _____

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Individualized Program Plan
Middle School

An Individualized Program Plan (IPP), which provides the student, parent, and teacher with an overall program plan to guide the implementation of the agreed-upon educational experiences and program activities that satisfy the academic year requirements, associated cumulative progress indicators and meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards, shall be prepared annually for each student placed in an alternative education program.

I.   IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Name of Student ⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺   Grade   ⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺

Sending School ⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺   District ⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺ County ⸺⸺⸺⸺

School Year ⸺⸺⸺⸺   Date of Birth ⸺⸺⸺⸺

II.   PROGRAM OPTION

The above-named student has been recommended for placement in the alternative education program indicated below:

Program Name⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺   Location⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺

⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺

⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺⸺

   A. Provide a Brief Program Description:

B. Provide a rationale which supports the recommendation:

C. The student's subject weaknesses are in the following areas:

D. The student's subject strengths are in the following areas:

III. *PLANNING TEAM*

List below the individuals that planned the alternative education program option for the above-named student:

Name   **Title**

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

The program described in this plan has been discussed with the pupil and reviewed and accepted by the parent(s) or guardian(s).

Student   _____

Name (please print)

_____   _____

Signature   Date

Parent/Guardian   _____

Name (please print)

_____   _____

Signature   Date

I hereby certify that the program option indicated above has been approved by me for the above-named student and that the progress indicators for the curricular area(s) indicated in Section IV will be assigned toward completion of the academic year requirement upon successful completion of the program.

Program Principal/Supervisor   _____

Name (please print)

_____   _____

Signature   Date

I hereby certify that the program option indicated above has been approved by me for the above-named student and that the progress indicators for the curricular area(s) indicated in Section IV are acceptable in pursuance of the sending district's board approved program.

Sending School   _____

Principal   _____

Name (please print)

_____   _____

Signature   Date

IV. *INTAKE STATUS*

1. Current Academic Standing/Report Card. (Please attach the most recent report card and standardized test scores.)
2. Current attendance record.
3. Current disciplinary record, including suspensions and expulsions.

V. **ACADEMIC COMPONENT**

Curriculum will be met by satisfactory completion of the program goals and objectives through the following methods:

A. Regular Course Completion – Indicate the cumulative progress indicators that will be met for each content area and how they relate to the appropriate New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standard (NJCCCS):

CONTENT AREAS	COURSE TITLE	PROGRESS INDICATOR (NJCCCS)
Language Arts Literacy	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____
Science	_____	_____
Social Studies	_____	_____
World Languages	_____	_____
Comprehensive Health and Physical Education	_____	_____
Visual and Performing Arts	_____	_____
Technology	_____	_____
Career Education and Consumer Family and Life Skills	_____	_____

VI. PERSONAL/SOCIAL COMPONENT

In each area below, indicate the student's goals, the objectives related to those goals and the staff member responsible for reviewing the student's progress. In addition, any supportive services and/or enrichment activities (e.g. group counseling once per week, individual counseling twice per week, service learning project) should be delineated in the appropriate area.

ATTENDANCE:

BEHAVIOR:

CAREER DEVELOPMENT:

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

OTHER (INDIVIDUALIZED CONCERNS):

VII. EXIT STATUS

1. Regular Course Completion – Indicate the progress indicators that were achieved or completed for each content area, including the program's grading system:

CONTENT AREA	COURSE TITLE	GRADE EARNED OR ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS
Language Arts Literacy	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____
Science	_____	_____
Social Studies	_____	_____
World Languages	_____	_____
Comprehensive Health and Physical Education	_____	_____
Visual and Performing Arts	_____	_____
Technology	_____	_____
Career Education and Consumer, Family and Life Skills	_____	_____

2. Social Progress – Indicate the progress made in the areas of attendance, behavior, career development and personal development.

3. Community Service – Indicate the community service hours completed and the content area(s) addressed.

Number of Hours —————— Content Area ————————————————

Number of Hours —————— Content Area ————————————————

Number of Hours —————— Content Area ————————————————

VIII. PROGRAM COMPLETION

Describe the student's reason for leaving the program.

Describe the transitional plan used to facilitate the student's exit from the program and into another setting.

IX.   *CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION*

This form must be signed at the end of each program year and kept on file with alternative education program and the sending school.

I hereby certify that the plan has been successfully implemented and satisfactorily completed and that credit has been granted and authorized for recording on the pupil's transcript.

Program Principal/Supervisor   _____
                                (Please Print)

Signature   _____

Date   _____

Sending School   _____

Principal   _____
                      (Please Print)

Signature   _____

Date   _____

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**RENEWAL APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO OPERATE AN
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**Instructions
2004 - 2005**

Please answer the following questions to assess whether a renewal application must be submitted.

1. Has the population to be served changed since the initial application?
   - ☐ yes
   - ☐ no
2. Has the location of the program changed since the initial application?
   - ☐ yes
   - ☐ no
3. Have the goals and objectives of the program changed since the initial application?
   - ☐ yes
   - ☐ no
4. Have the content or curriculum of the program changed since the initial application?
   - ☐ yes
   - ☐ no

If an applicant answers *no* to all of the above and has received approval, from the county office of education, to operate an alternative education program after September 2002, they must submit the attached renewal application.

If an applicant answers *yes* to *one or two* of the above questions, they must submit the renewal application addressing the area that has been modified or changed.

If an applicant answers *yes to three or more* of the above questions, they must resubmit a new application.

When completing the renewal application, please attach the following:
- A copy of the initial program approval letter;
- A list of all program staff, (including descriptions of staff roles and staff certifications);
- The number of students served within the past two years and a projection of the number to be served in the upcoming year (including the anticipated number of special education students); and
- An updated Alternative Program Statement of Assurances appropriately signed.

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**RENEWAL APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO OPERATE AN
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM**

PROGRAM INFORMATION

District _____ County _____

Program Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

_____

_____

District Contact Person _____ Phone _____
Email _____ Fax _____

Board Approval* (Date) _____ Grade Level(s) _____ Credits _____
*(Attach Copy of Board Action)

Districts implementing regional or countywide programs should also complete this section.

District _____ County _____
(Regional or countywide programs) *(Regional or countywide programs)*

District Contact Person _____ Phone _____
(Regional or countywide programs)

Board Approval* (Date) _____
(Regional or countywide programs)

Renewal approval is requested for the above named alternative education program.

The applicant has read and agrees to abide by the requirements described in the assurances policy statement. Whereas, the applicant employs teachers who hold the appropriate certificates to provide instruction and has created and is implementing a curriculum based on the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards, the applicant agrees to keep records and provide information to the New Jersey Department of Education as required for verification and evaluation purposes.

_____ _____

Date Submitted (Signature) Alternative Education Program
Principal/Administrator

_____   _____
Date Submitted   (Signature) Chief School Administrator

_____   _____
Date Approved   (Signature) County Superintendent of Schools

_____   _____
Date Approved   (Signature) **OPPD** Manager******
**(This signature applies only to Abbott Districts)

Districts implementing regional or countywide programs should also complete this section.

_____   _____
Date Submitted   (Signature) Middle/High School Principal

_____   _____
Date Submitted   (Signature) Chief School Administrator

_____   _____
Date Approved   (Signature) County Superintendent of Schools

_____   _____
Date Approved   (Signature) OPPD Manager******

•**Attach separate pages for each additional district that will participate in this alternative education program.**

Please check to indicate that all items identified below are attached:
- A copy of the initial program approval letter; _____

- A list of all program staff (describing staff roles and including staff certifications); _____

- The number of students served within the past two years _____

- A projection of the number of students to be served in the upcoming year (including the anticipated number of special education students) _____

- Updated program information (if applicable)
    - Change in population to be served   _____
    - Change in program location   _____
    - Change in program goals and objectives   _____
    - Change in curriculum content   _____

- Alternative Program Statement of Assurances   _____